



parks & recreation MASTER PLAN

city of harper woods, michigan

2018-2022



DRAFT

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

2018 - 2022

City of Harper Woods, Michigan

Prepared by City of Harper Woods, Wayne County, Michigan

with the assistance of



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The content in this Plan reflects the ongoing collaboration between residents, stakeholders, and City Council and its appointed boards and commissions. In particular, we acknowledge the efforts of:

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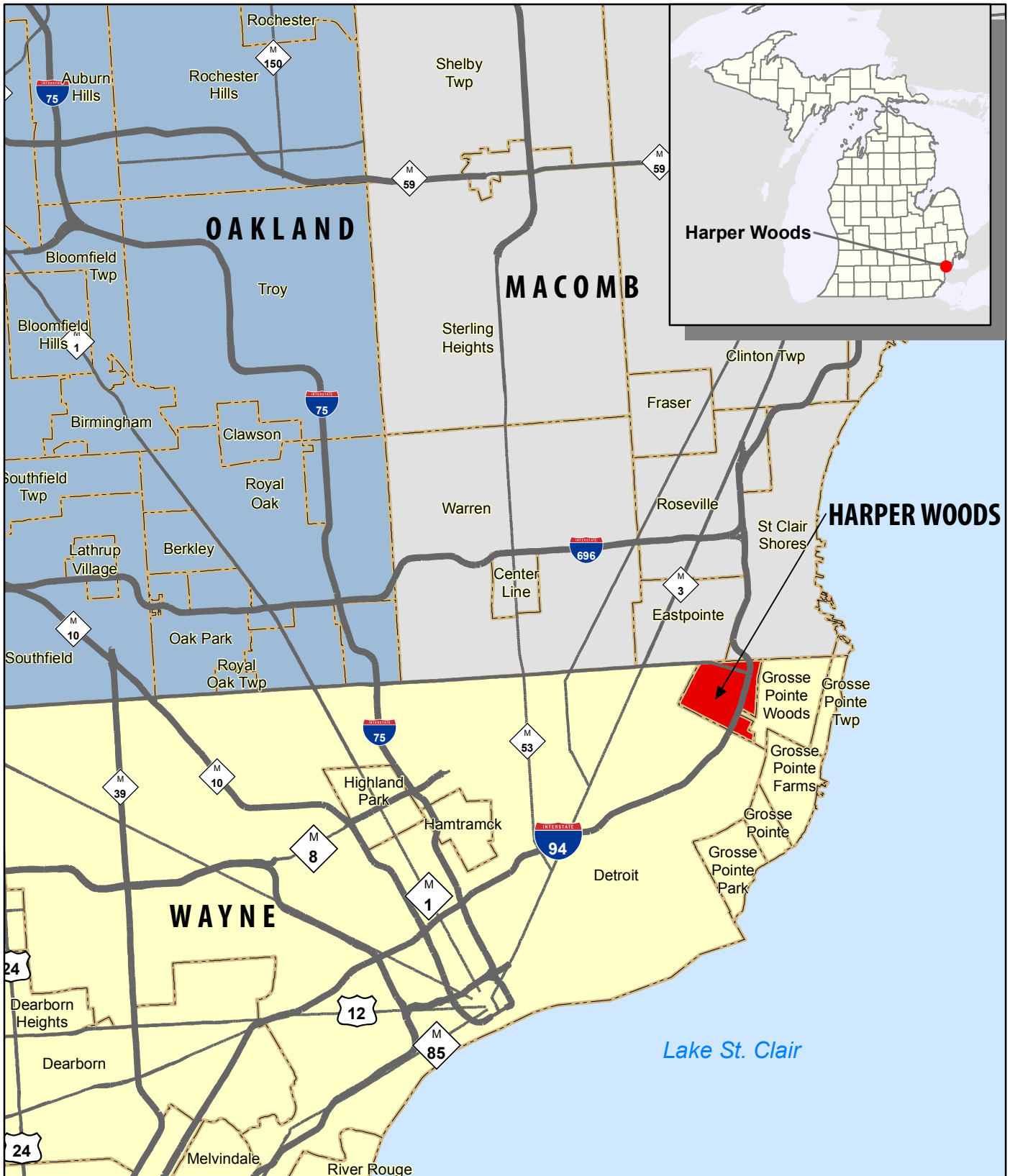
SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Recreation Board and Planning Commission coordinated this open, public planning process to create a comprehensive vision for Harper Woods parks and recreation programs, satisfying the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

A Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a roadmap for parks and recreation decisions (including facilities and programming) made over a five-year period, as well as a way to project future needs. The Plan includes all required elements of a Parks and Recreation Plan, and therefore qualifies Harper Woods for funding through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). The process taken to prepare the Plan gives the City a better understanding of the needs and wants for parks, recreation facilities and programming based on public engagement and industry trends going forward.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan covers the years of 2018 through 2022, though it will be a useful planning tool beyond the five-year mark. The City's current Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2000, and resulted in the following improvements during the ensuing years:

- Updated playgrounds at all three City parks.
- Maintenance of grounds, facilities, and natural features at all three City parks.
- Efficient and effective administration of parks and recreation functions in Harper Woods.

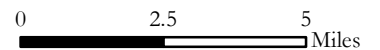


October 18, 2017

Data Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, 2011

Map 1
Regional Location
 Harper Woods, Michigan

- Municipal Boundaries
- Macomb County
- Harper Woods
- Oakland County
- Wayne County





SECTION II. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Harper Woods, Michigan, is a community with predominately residential land uses, along with a handful of prominent commercial corridors. Comprised of 2.63 square miles, Harper Woods is bordered by the City of Detroit, as well as other communities in Wayne and Macomb Counties, including Grosse Pointe Woods, Eastpointe, and St. Clair Shores.

The area that is now Harper Woods was first settled by Caspar and Elizabeth Salter in 1850. The Salters built their log cabin on Pumpkin Hook Road, which was later renamed Kelly Road. The area was developed slowly (predominately farmland), experienced a slowdown during the Great Depression, then enjoyed a great building boom after World War II. Between 1940 and 1950, the Harper Woods community changed from a farming community to a suburban community.

Harper Woods officially became a city on October 29, 1951 and was named after its then main thoroughfare, Harper Avenue. Since then, the City has settled into an established community of graceful tree-lined streets, homes of a variety of sizes and styles, commercial areas (including Eastland Center, a large enclosed shopping mall), and community facilities.

The Great Recession of 2008 was a disruptive force for community leaders and residents in Harper Woods, bringing about declining incomes, rapid changes in demographics, and home foreclosures. Still, now almost 10 years out of the recession, leaders and impassioned community volunteers believe the City has turned a corner and will thrive once more.

Parks and recreation is a critical component of a thriving community, and this Plan is an important document for implementation of place-based improvements.

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

The Harper Woods Parks and Recreation Master Plan is updated and maintained to determine needs and opportunities that exist within the City. Consideration is given to:

- Estimates of the number of likely users of recreational amenities;
- Projections of what type of programs users will enthusiastically participate in;
- The facilities that are necessary to further the community’s parks and recreation-related goals and objectives.

By understanding current conditions and past trends, the City can appropriately anticipate and plan for the future needs of the community.

Data within this plan is sourced from the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, analyzed and synthesized by McKenna. The ACS samples a percentage of the community on such topics as population, housing, and age structure.

POPULATION

Population trends are important indicators for parks and recreation planning. Growing communities likely have different parks and recreational needs than communities with stable or declining populations. Table 1 shows the relative populations of Harper Woods and nearby comparison communities.

Table 1: Population

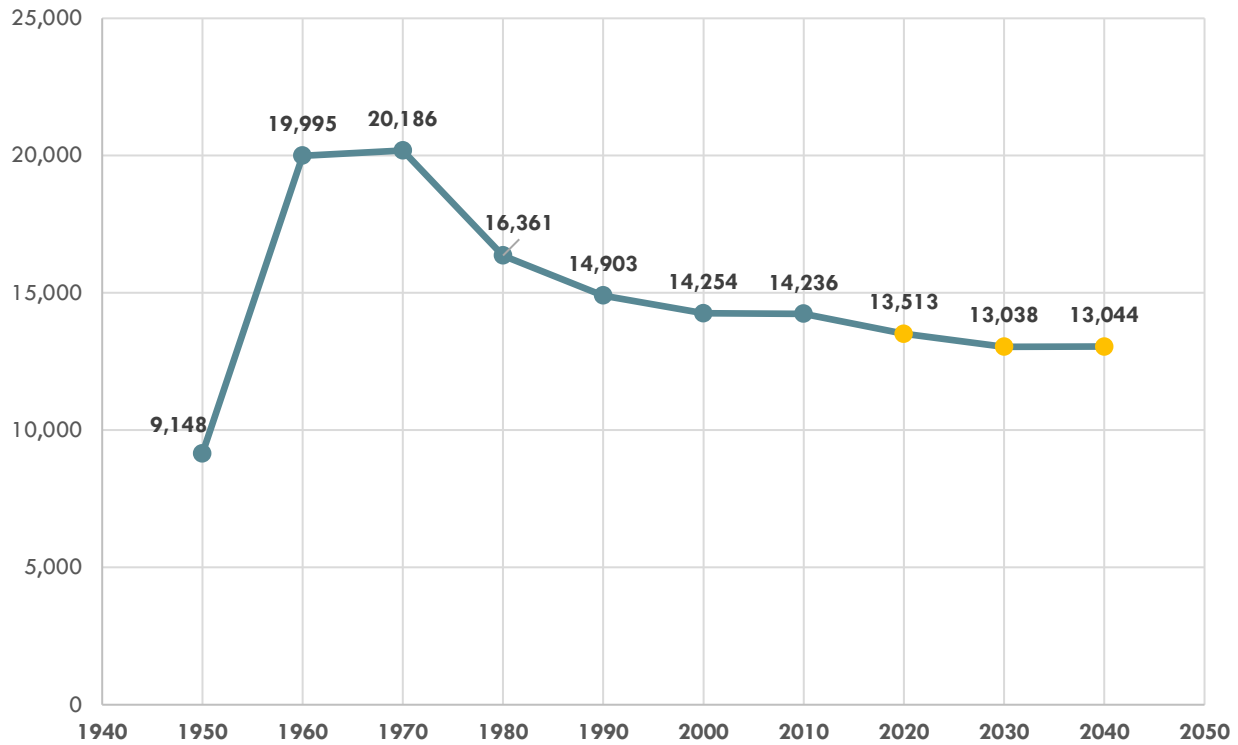
	Harper Woods	Center Line	Detroit	Eastpointe	Grosse Pointe Farms	Grosse Pointe Woods	St. Clair Shores
2000	14,254	8,531	951,270	34,077	9,764	17,080	63,096
2010	14,236	8,257	713,862	32,442	9,479	16,135	59,715
2015	13,964	8,306	690,074	32,585	9,307	15,859	59,888
% Change	-2.03%	-2.64%	-27.46%	-4.38%	-4.68%	-7.15%	-5.08%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Like many communities across southeastern Michigan, Harper Woods has experienced a decline in population since 2000; a loss of 290 persons. The level of decline is considerably less than surrounding communities, most of which experienced more than double the rate of loss of Harper Woods.

As shown in Figure 1, Harper Woods' population is projected to continue to decrease in future decades. Being able to project a community's future population, based upon previous decades, allows targeted strategy discussions for many City services, including parks and recreation.

Figure 1: Harper Woods Population

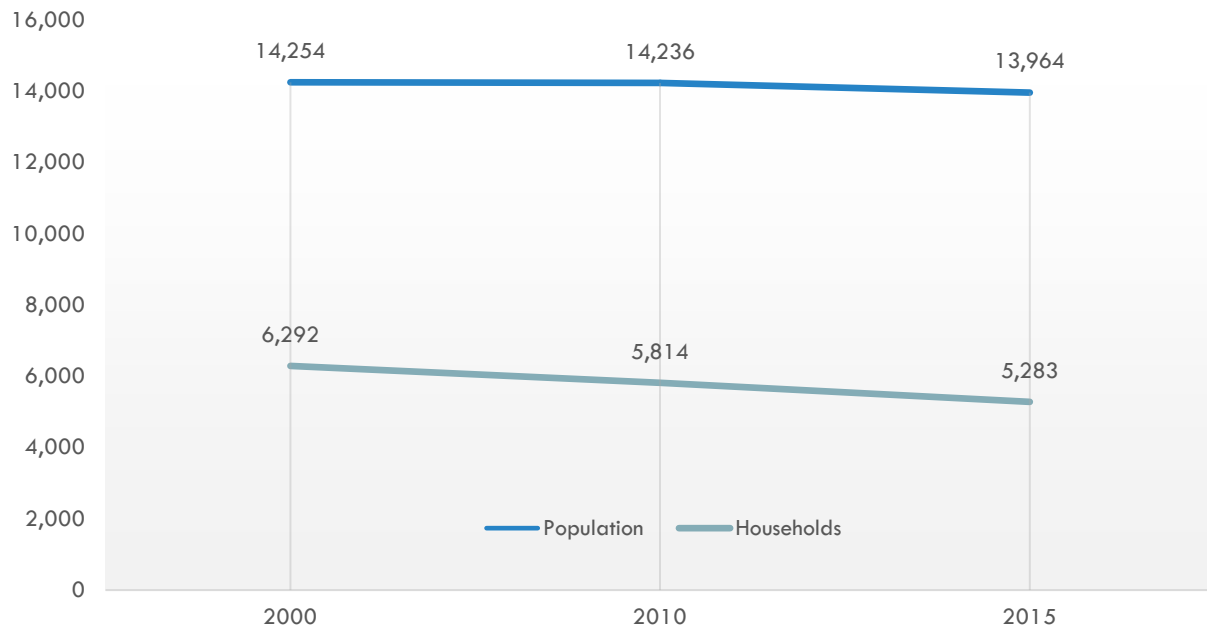


HOUSEHOLDS

Household growth has a different impact on demand for recreation services than does population growth. If the population is growing faster than the number of households, this typically suggests that more children are being born within existing households. If households are growing faster than population, this typically suggests that more singles or couples without children (often newly married or older) are residing in the community.

Figure 2 suggest the decline in population and number of households is correlated, in that one has affected the other. As residents have moved away from Harper Woods over the past 15 years, for various reasons, the number of households has also decreased.

Figure 2: Population and Households



Average household size is another indicator of community composition. Larger average household sizes generally mean more children and fewer single-parent families. Nationally, household sizes have been shrinking as young singles wait longer to get married and life expectancy increases for the senior population.

The average household size in Harper Woods has increased by almost 17 percent since 2000. This rate of escalation, in the context of a declining population and number of households, suggests that those residing in a given household are remaining in their existing homes (potentially childhood homes) before moving out (of parents' homes). This is a common occurrence with the rise cost of higher education tuition and the effects of the Recession; young adults are remaining in their childhood homes longer than their parents or grandparents had in previous decades. It could also indicate that households moving into Harper Woods are replacing households with a lower number of persons residing in the home (for example, a family of four replacing an elderly prior owner).

HOUSING OCCUPANTS

The make-up of housing occupants within a City can provide additional information about the community's profile; some argue that those who rent their homes are temporary residents and may not have the same level of investment in an area as a property owner.

According to the 2015 American Community Survey, over 62 percent of households in Harper Woods are owner-occupied. Several of the nearby communities, including Eastpointe, Center Line and Detroit, have a high percentage of renter-occupied properties; Center Line and Detroit are nearly split 50/50.

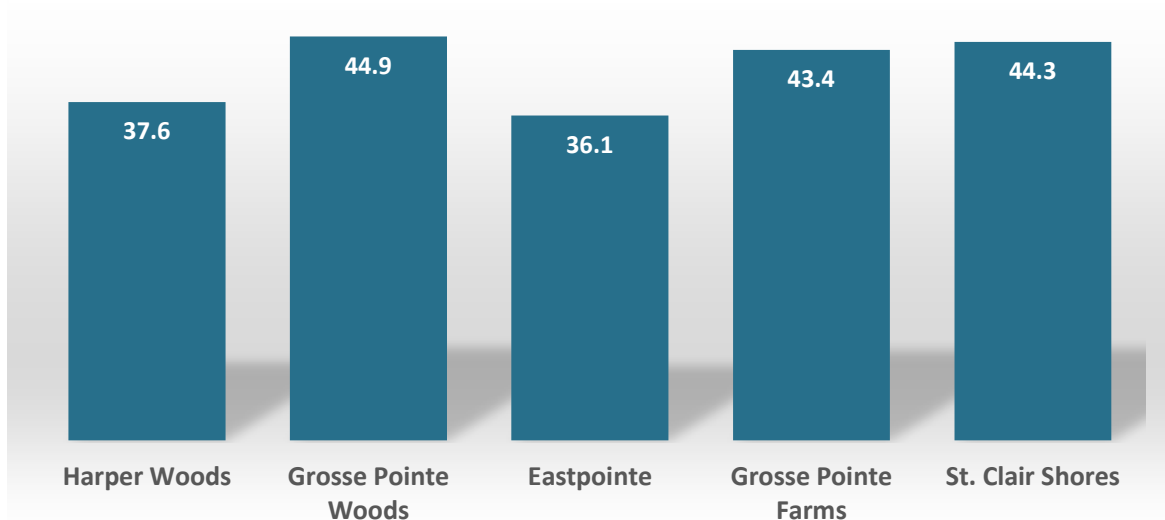
Though many inner-ring suburbs in metro Detroit experienced similar increases in renter percentages, the hope is that current renters will make more permanent investments in Harper Woods (rather than a nearby suburb). Parks and recreation amenities are frequently rated as important elements when individuals and families make locational decisions.

AGE STRUCTURE

The age of a community’s population is extremely important when planning for parks and recreation improvements. Older residents may have different needs than childless 20-somethings, or those who have families with children.

Figure 3 compares the median ages of Harper Woods residents to surrounding communities (2015). Residents of Harper Woods are a healthy mix of all age groups. When considered with the household data in earlier sections, this suggests that the City of Harper Woods is going through a transition period. The population has dipped in previous years; however, the lower median age (37.6 years) compared to surrounding areas indicates that there is a younger group of folks in the community.

Figure 3: Median Age in Harper Woods and Surrounding Communities



Age structure (analyzing which proportions of a municipality’s population are in which stages of life) gives a nuanced view of the makeup of a community. To compare age structure, the percentage of the population in Harper Woods is divided into the following age groupings:

- Under 5 (Pre School) 4.3%
- 5 to 19 (School Aged) 24.6%
- 20 to 44 (Family Forming) 31.1%
- 45 to 64 (Mature Families) 28.6%
- Over 65 (Retirement) 11.4%

The majority of the population of the City of Harper Woods are family forming and mature family members. The demographics imply that the City could potentially see an increase in population due to the nature of the age distribution. However, with 40 percent of the population composed of mature families and those of retirement age, services to senior adults will be an important component of the City’s decision-making processes related to parks and recreation.

INCOME

Household income data can have important planning implications. Current income levels suggest that City residents need quality and accessible public recreation, as residents are more likely to utilize public rather than private recreation facilities due to cost.

Table 2 below illustrates the median household income trend since 2000. The steep decline in median household income between 2000 and 2010 is attributed to the Great Recession, newer residents with lower incomes moving into the city, and unemployment increases during that time period.

Table 2: Median Household Income

Year	Median Household Income
2000	\$65,553*
2010	\$48,952*
2015	\$48,820

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, * 2015 Dollars

In 2000, 2.8 percent of the City’s 16 and older population were unemployed. By 2010, the unemployment rate had increased to 15.1 percent of the population 16 and older.

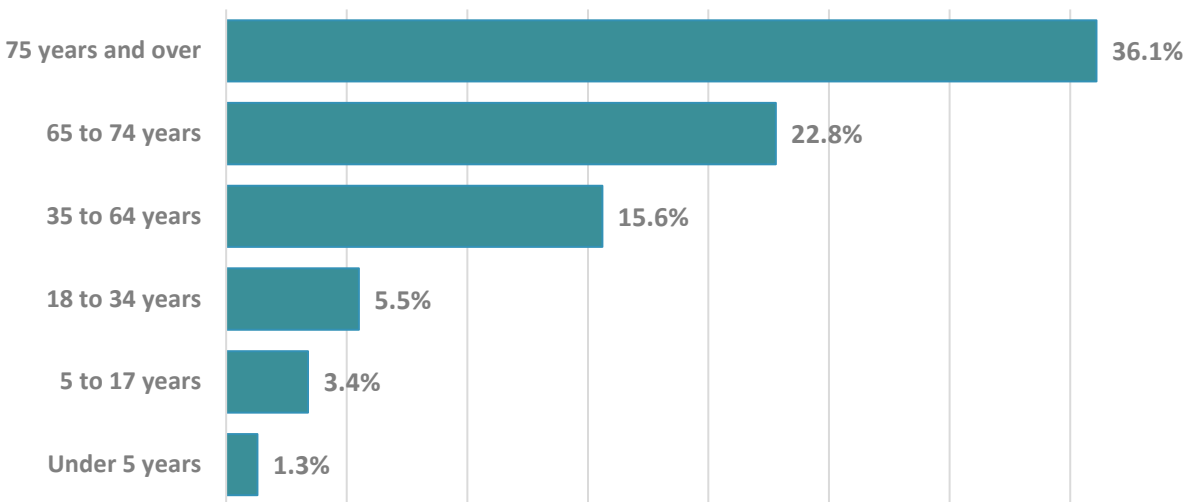
DISABILITIES

The type of disability and number of residents impacted by disabilities will impact the design and accommodations made for them within the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and on future improvements to City facilities. The Census Bureau reports that approximately 11.7 percent of residents have a disability of some sort in Harper Woods, with the most impacted populations being its 75 and over age group. The most prevalent disabilities within the population are ambulatory and independent living difficulties, followed by cognitive difficulty.



Above: Children at play on the same equipment planned for Salter Park installation in 2018.

Figure 4: Disability Population Percentage



Planning for parks and recreation could result in positive health outcomes for a population that already experiences difficulties on a day-to-day basis. Accommodations could include ramps or pavement improvements in order to ease accessibility concerns for those who suffer from ambulatory difficulties, or installing audible and visually assisted cross walks that assist those who may be visually or hearing impaired.

INCLUSIVE PLAY

For children with and without disabilities, the community playground can facilitate a positive environment for physical activity and inclusion.



The ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), signed into law in 2010, detail enforceable standards for physical accessibility. However, these standards do not include elements designed for children with Down syndrome, sensory disorders, and visual and hearing impairments.

New attention has been focused on inclusive playgrounds and universal design that can serve a diverse population, including children with physical, cognitive, emotional and sensory disabilities.

The following elements are considered essential activities for inclusive play:

- Sensory play
- Music
- Swinging
- Spinning
- Sliding
- Socialization/imaginative
- Safety, comfort and access

Sources: United States Access Board, Landscape Structures; InclusivePlaygrounds.org

B. Physical Characteristics

TOPOGRAPHY

The topography in Harper Woods is flat throughout the community. Elevations gradually decrease from 600 feet on the western portion of the City to 585 feet on the east, a 15 foot change in elevation over two miles.

WATER RESOURCES / FISH AND WILDLIFE

Harper Woods has no major water body within or running through its boundaries. All drainage throughout the City is served by storm drains and underground pipelines. The City is entirely developed, without natural wooded areas that would be habitable for fish or wildlife populations.

SOILS

The Wayne County Soil Survey shows that Harper Woods has two major soil associations. The Pewamo-Blount-Metamora Association is nearly level to gently sloping land and is somewhat poorly drained. The Hoytville-Nappanee Association consists of nearly level land, very poorly to somewhat poorly drained that have a fine textured subsoil. The soil survey for Wayne County is general in nature, and the information it provides cannot be used as the basis for a construction project.

However, it provides a good look at the main characteristics of the soils in the area. The inability of the soils in the area to drain well indicates that any proposed open fields for recreation must be developed with a well-designed drainage plan so that the surfaces are not occupied with standing water after a period of rain. The nature of the soils also requires that the analysis of existing facilities takes into account the ability of open fields to drain adequately ensuring that facilities will be used to the fullest extent.

VEGETATION

The City is nearly built out. Most vegetation has been planted as landscaping. Many mature trees do exist in the City found adjacent to roads and in yards of single family homes.



Right: Danbury Park vegetation in the autumn.

CLIMATE

According to U.S. Climate Data, the average temperature near Harper Woods is 49.5 degrees Fahrenheit, with the average high at 59.3 degrees Fahrenheit and 39.8 degrees Fahrenheit. The yearly high temperature averages 84 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and 27 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter. This climate is suitable for a variety of outdoor recreational activities, such as biking, running, ice skating, hockey, etc.



Above: Cold weather activities are fun for children and adults.

EXISTING LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

The major land use in Harper Woods is single family residential. The majority of the land in the City has been developed, leaving no room for new subdivisions or parks. Any new housing being constructed is being placed on single lots or larger lots that are a consolidation of smaller residential lots. The existing residential areas have developed into well-defined residential neighborhoods. Major roads, commercial and industrial areas act as boundaries between many residential neighborhoods. As a result, basic recreational needs for the neighborhoods can be discussed within their own areas by providing for small parks and green areas that are accessible by foot without crossing major roadways.

The majority of the intense development has occurred along major roads, specifically, Kelly Road, Eight Mile Road, Vernier Street and the east side of Harper Avenue.

The remaining areas of Harper Woods are occupied by public schools, buildings, churches, transportation corridors and utilities. The City is built out, leaving very little opportunities for any large-scale expansion of existing recreational facilities or acquisition of land for new facilities. Any opportunities for such expansion or acquisition in the future would depend greatly upon the vacating of an existing use from its current location. This option is not desirable and will not be encouraged. However, if any opportunities occur in the future, the possibility for expansion or acquisition should be consider only if it would help meet the recreational goals of the plan.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

The City of Harper Woods' circulation system, well-established since the 1960s, is a mature grid system. This pattern has been able to reasonably accommodate the increases in vehicular travel over the years by providing motorists with multiple options to reach a chosen destination.

As a result of the grid pattern, the land was divided into blocks which created neighborhoods for the residents of Harper Woods. This neighborhood character is one of the greatest assets of the City. Harper Woods has a strong sense of community which will likely continue to flourish due partly because of the street network in place.



Above: Bicycle parking at Johnston Park tennis courts.



SECTION III. INVENTORY OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

McKenna inventoried existing local and regional recreation facilities in May and October of 2017. The physical inventory of local facilities consisted of site inspections of all city parks and recreation sites. An inventory of playground equipment and park facilities was recorded and reviewed with regard to location, acreage, quantity, quality, accessibility, and condition (See Table 3). The regional inventory consisted of review and compilation of regional park facilities, brochures, and telephone interviews (See Table 4).

A. MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

Currently within the City of Harper Woods, the City owns and operates three parks - one mini park, one neighborhood park, and one community park (see Map 2). In addition, the basement of the public library is used for meetings and aerobics classes. All these facilities are owned and maintained by the City of Harper Woods.

Table 3 illustrates the existing inventory of recreational equipment and fields at these facilities. Play areas include various fields for organized games such as baseball, football and soccer. Hard court areas include tennis courts. Play structures are modular equipment while playground equipment includes swing sets, slides and jungle gyms.

Fitness areas consists of any fitness stations, chin-up bars, balance beams or some type of equipment to facilitate a workout. Johnston Park has chin-up bars.

Passive areas include picnic areas or nature/hiking trail/foot paths. Salter Park has an asphalt walk and two pavilions with picnic tables and grilles. Johnston Park has three picnic areas and Danbury Park has one. Johnston and Salter Park restrooms are available to the public.

The inventory indicates that Harper Woods has a variety play equipment and facilities, but the City is dependent on public school facilities to provide programming to the citizens.



Above: Modular play equipment at Danbury Park.

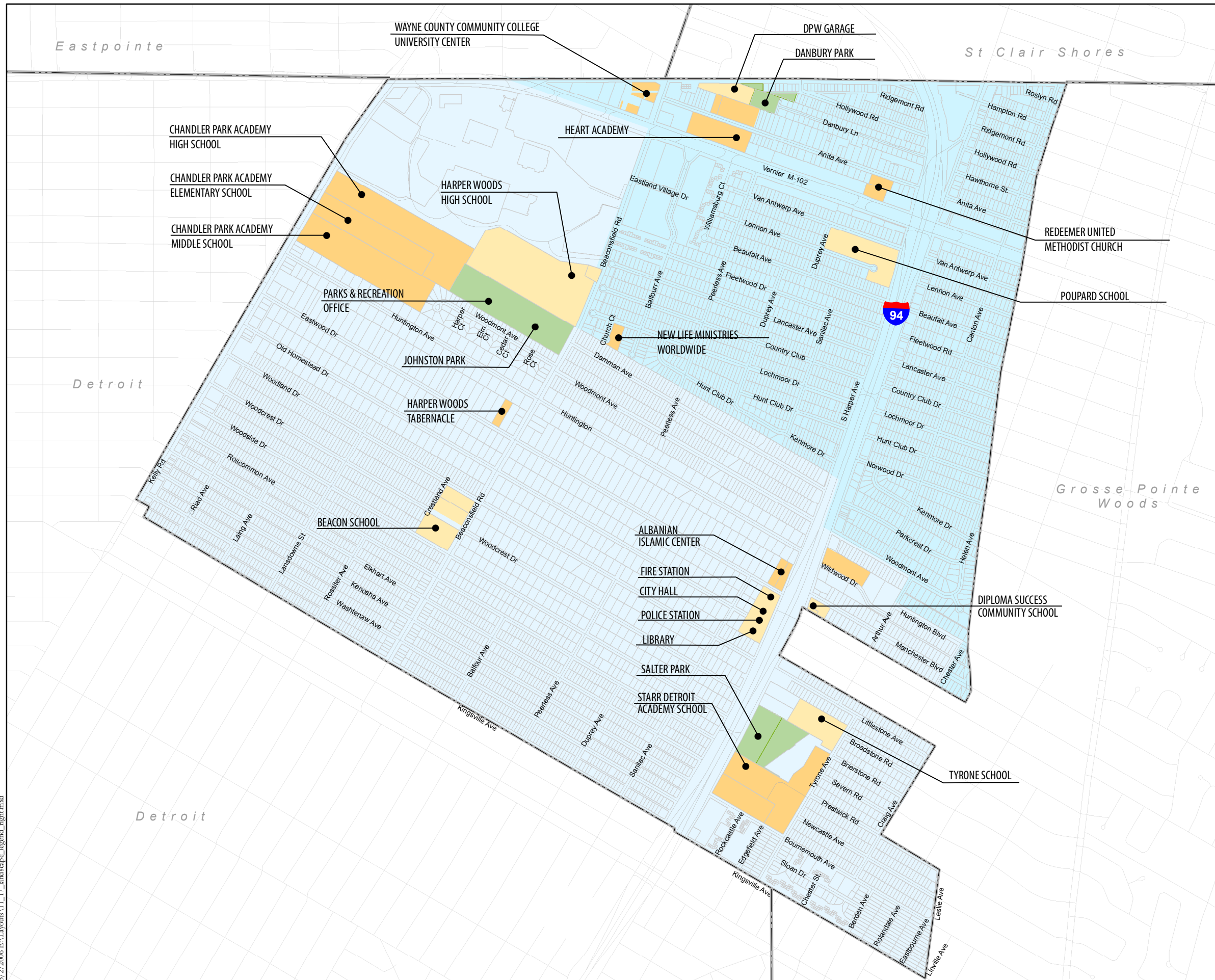
Map 2 Community Facilities

Harper Woods, Michigan

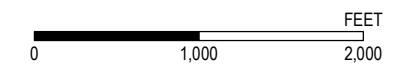
October 18, 2017

LEGEND

- Parks Facilities
- Public Facilities
- Private/Semi Private Facilities
- Grosse Pointe Public School System
- Harper Woods District
- Municipal Boundary



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Basemap Source: City of Harper Woods 7/17/12
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc. 6/98

Table 3: Existing Parks*

FACILITY NAME	ACRES	Type	Parking Spaces	AMENITIES				HARD SURFACED AREAS				PASSIVE AREAS						PLAY AREAS							PLAY STRUCTURES & GROUNDS				INDOOR FACILITIES				MEMORIAL / LAKE / Pond / Wetland	CURRENT CONDITIONS (good, fair, poor)	ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT (scale 1-5)	NOTES									
				Concessions	Restrooms	Storage	Vending Machines	Basketball Courts	In-Line Skating Area	Skate Park	Tennis Courts	Track	Benches	Fishing Pier	Pathway	Fitness Equipment	Pavilion	Picnic Areas	Stage/Band Shelter/Amphitheater	Spectator Seating	Ball Diamonds (Baseball/Softball)	Swings	Slides	Jungle Jim/Climbers	Lighting	Multiple Purpose Field	Pool (Outdoor)	Sand Volleyball Court	Soccer	Metal Play Structure	Modular Play Equipment	Number of Playgrounds					Resilient Surface	Timber Play Structure	Fitness Center	Gymnasiums	Ice Skating Rink	Meeting Rooms	Pool / Boat Launch	Stage	
Salter Memorial Park		NP			X					X		X	2	X				X	X	X	X						1	1	No														Good	2	Additional amenities: Bike parking, grills, shuffleboard courts
Johnston Park		CP		X	X	X		X					1	X				3	X	X	X	X					2	2	No										M	Good	2	Additional amenities: Pickleball, bike parking, grills, memorial, batting cages for insured Little League teams, and wintertime ice skating rink			
Danbury Park		MP						X						X				X	X	X						2	2	No												Good	2	Additional amenities: Bike parking, grills			

LEGEND

*Based on Field Observations in May and October, 2017

SERVICE AREAS:

CP = Community Park

MP = Mini Park

NP = Neighborhood Park

X = one present; # = identified present

ACCESSIBILITY:

1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines

5 = the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

B. SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Harper Woods School District has two elementary schools, one junior high school and one high school located in the City of Harper Woods. The Grosse Pointe School District has one elementary school located within Harper Woods. All of these school facilities have some form of recreational facilities or equipment either inside or outside of the buildings.

These facilities, when available, are used by the Department of Recreation to provide recreation programs. The public elementary schools have play structures and/or equipment such as swings and slides. In addition, the middle school and high school have ball fields, hard court areas and gymnasiums and a pool for indoor recreation.

Perhaps the most notable recreation amenity at the school facilities is the indoor swimming pool located in the Harper Woods High School. The City currently does not own any swimming facilities and the pool located at the high school is the primary opportunity for swimming in the City.

The school facilities' main purpose is to provide recreational opportunities for the students in attendance at the respective schools. However, when coordinated with the school district, facilities can be used by the general public under certain conditions. This practice is seen in many communities and, in general, school facilities have an average service area based on the amenities they have to offer. The amenities available are generally in direct correlation to the type of school. Elementary schools serve the residents of the neighborhoods in which they are located, while the middle schools and the high schools tend to serve a broader population base. Since the primary users of the recreation facilities are the students, the general public should not depend greatly on school facilities to meet their recreational needs.

C. PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES

Several privately-owned recreation facilities are also located in or near the City of Harper Woods. A total of six private or charter schools contain several acres of open space and indoor and outdoor facilities.

Other private recreational facilities are located in adjacent communities. Although use of these facilities is limited to those who can afford the fees, they do address certain recreation needs. Adjacent community facilities include: ice rinks, golf courses, YMCA, and bowling alleys.

Ice Rinks

Several cities close to Harper Woods have indoor ice skating rinks. However, the majority of Harper Woods residents cannot use these facilities due to the high cost and limited availability of ice time. Distance to the facilities is also an impediment.

GOLF

Golf courses are the most accessible private recreational facilities in the area. There are over thirty courses private and public within thirty miles from the City. Chandler Park in Detroit is the closest public course to Harper Woods.

D. REGIONAL RECREATION RESOURCES

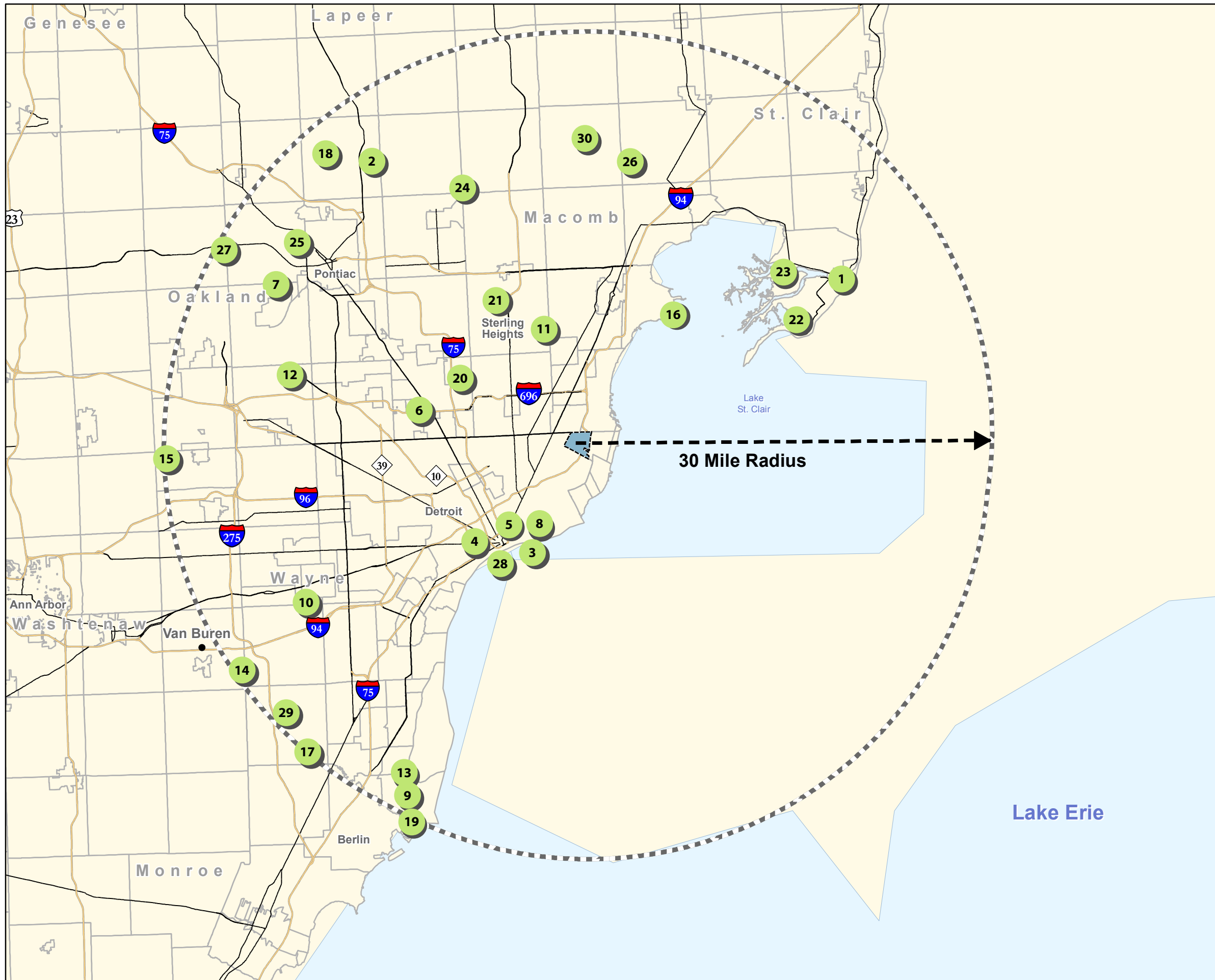
Regional recreation areas are large facilities serving people within a broad geographic area. The region has been defined as the area within roughly a one-half to one hour driving radius of Harper Woods. Table 4 and Map 3 summarize and locate these regional facilities. The size and type of facilities vary, but in general these facilities are 200 acres or more in size.

In addition, nearby regional recreational facilities include parks and facilities owned and operated by Oakland, Genesee and Wayne counties and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority.

Table 4: Existing Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities

Facilities on Site	Bald Mountain State Recreation Area	Brighton Recreation Area	Genesee Recreation Area	Highland Recreation Area	Holly Recreation Area	Island Lake State Recreation Area	Maybury State Park	Ontonville State Recreation Area	Pickney State Recreation Area	Proud Lake Recreation Area	Seven Lakes State Park	Sleepy Hollow State Park	Wetzel State Park	Delhi Metro Park	Dexter-Huron Metro park	Huron Meadows Metro park	Indian Springs Metro Park	Kensington Metro Park	Lake Erie Metro Park	Lower Huron Metro Park	Metro beach Metro Park	Oakwoods Metro Park	Stony Creek Metro Park	Willow Metro Park	Wolcott Metro Park	Buell Lake County Park	Flushing County Prairie	Former Natural Preserve &Arboretum
Acres	4637	4913	4460	5624	7670				11,000	3614	1410			53	123	1539	2215	4357	1607	1258	770	1700	4461	1500	2380	213	105	380
Camping		X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X								X								
Picnic Areas		X	X	X	X					X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Concession Stands/Bathrooms	X	X	X	X	X					X	X																	
Picnic Shelters		X																										
Playground/Play area		X																										
Boat Launch																												
Boat or Canoe Rental			X			X								X		X		X		X				X	X		X	
Swimming/Beach		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Fishing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Cross Country Skiing	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Snowmobiling		X	X	X	X			X		X	X		X													X	X	
Sledging			X														X	X	X	X				X	X			
Ice Skating																			X	X				X	X			
Riding Stables		X	X	X	X		X			X																		
Nature Center/Visitor Center				X													X	X				X	X					X
Hiking Trails	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Biking Trails	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X						X	X								X	X	
Golf															X	X	X	X	X									
Softball/Baseball fields			X																							X	X	
Marina																		X			X		X					

Source: Huron Clinton Metro Park Guide, Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission Recreation Plan, Michigan State Parks, Oakland County Parks, McKenna Associates



Map 3 Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities

Harper Woods, Michigan

October 18, 2017

- Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities
- 1 Algonac State Park
- 2 Bald Mountain State Recreation Area
- 3 Belle Isle Bench
- 4 Belle Isle Fishing Pier
- 5 Detroit Garden Center
- 6 Detroit Zoological Park
- 7 Dodge Brother State Park #4
- 8 East River Front Loop Bikeway
- 9 Elizabeth Park Boat Launch
- 10 Ford Motor Company's MI. Arboretum
- 11 Freedom Hill County Park
- 12 Glen Oaks County Park
- 13 Lake Erie Metropark
- 14 Lower Huron Metropark
- 15 Maybury State Park
- 16 Metrobeach Metropark
- 17 Oakwood Metropark
- 18 Orion Oaks County Park
- 19 Pointe Mouillee State Game Area
- 20 Red Oaks County Park
- 21 Rochester-Utica State Recreation Area
- 22 St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area
- 23 St. Johns Marshland Recreational Area
- 24 Stony Creek Metropark
- 25 Waterford Oaks County Park
- 26 Wetzel State Park
- 27 White Lake Oaks County Park
- 28 Whitecomb Conservatory
- 29 Willow Metropark
- 30 Wolcott Mill Metropark



Data Source: McKenna Associates, 2006.
Base Map Source: Wayne County GIS, 2004

E. HISTORICAL RECREATION SITES

There are no known recreational sites or structures that have historical significance.

F. RECREATION PROGRAMS

A very large variety of recreation programs is offered in the City of Harper Woods. While many programs are organized by the Recreation Department, some private groups organize activities - mainly for youth - including the NU MEN (Neighborhood United: Maximum Effort Now) youth service organization, which focuses on leadership and basketball.



Right: A group of NU MEN student leaders.

The Recreation Department utilizes many facilities to house its recreation programs. The City is dependent on the Harper Woods school facilities to provide its swimming, arts and crafts, martial arts, yoga, gymnastics and softball programs. Since the City does not have an indoor recreation facility, all indoor recreation programs are located at School sites. A verbal agreement between the City and the Harper Woods School Board gives the City use of the school facilities only after official school functions are finished for the day.

Recreation programming is scheduled three times per year. These program sessions include the Autumn Program, Winter Program and the Summer Program. The Recreation Department publishes a handout for each program throughout the year; the Autumn and Winter programs are often advertised together. Information concerning the Recreation Department's policies are listed as are the programs that are offered. This information is also broadcast on the City's closed-captioned TV network.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

The following is a representative list of the programs offered by the City in any given year.

CULTURAL ARTS

- Youth Arts and Crafts
- Youth Chess
- Youth Dance Lessons and Showcase
- Pedal to Porch Storytelling and Bicycling Event

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES/LESSONS

- Harper Woods Walking Club
- Martial Arts
- Adult Swim Lessons
- Water Aerobics
- Tumbling
- Zumba
- Dance
- Yoga
- Women's Self Defense
- Open Swim
- Tai Chi
- Pickleball
- Fitness Firm Aerobics

YOUTH ATHLETICS

- Soccer Clinics
- Tennis
- Swimming Lessons
- Soccer Leagues
- Basketball Camp

NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB PROGRAMS

The Neighborhood Club provides recreation and cultural program serving Harper Woods and the Grosse Pointes (Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Shores, and Grosse Pointe Woods).

The Harper Woods Recreation Department coordinates its activities with the Neighborhood Club to best provide for its own residents, while not duplicating the programs provided by the Neighborhood Club (unless additional programs would be beneficial). Coordination includes scheduling and information.

SENIOR PROGRAMS

The Senior Club meets at the Harper Woods Library on the first Monday of the month. Besides several meetings and social events, several other activities are planned throughout the year. Activities from past years include: pinochle, welcome back dinner dance, autumn party, Halloween party, Valentines Day party, St. Patrick's Day party, feather bingo party, and Holiday Party.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Tree Lighting Ceremony: Each year in November the lights on the City Christmas tree are turned on for the Christmas session. Afterwards, public officials and citizens join together to sing Christmas carols. Refreshments are available.



SECTION IV. PARKS AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION

A. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

As the number of facilities and programs has changed over the years, the administrative structure has changed to better manage those facilities and programs. Figure 5 illustrates the administrative structure currently in place.

The Recreation Advisory Board is comprised of five Harper Woods residents who advise the City Council and the Director of Parks and Recreation on various park and recreation issues. Any suggestions and concerns of City residents concerning facilities and programs are brought up and discussed by the Board.

The Director of Parks and Recreation has direct authority from the City Manager. Several employees are supervised by the Director including: Administrative staff, crew leaders, maintenance professionals, seasonal staff – approximately 25-30 employees in total. The Director performs administrative duties in addition to meeting with the Recreation Advisory Board. The Director is also responsible for planning, developing and evaluating community recreation activities and programs.

B. PARKS AND RECREATION FUNDING

There are several existing or potential funding sources available for parks and recreation facility improvements. In addition to the City's General Fund, other potential sources of funding for parks and recreation include: a dedicated millage (such as a land acquisition millage), user fees, revenue bonds, donation of land and/or easements, and contractual agreements involving privatization. Following is a brief description of current funding sources and other potential sources the community may consider:

GENERAL FUND

The General Fund is the basic operating fund for the City of Harper Woods. It is also the traditional source of operating funds for parks and recreation. General Fund revenues are derived from property taxes, state-shared revenues, federal grants, license and permit fees, charges for services, interest on investments, and court fines or forfeitures. Recreation program user fees are usually channeled through the General Fund.

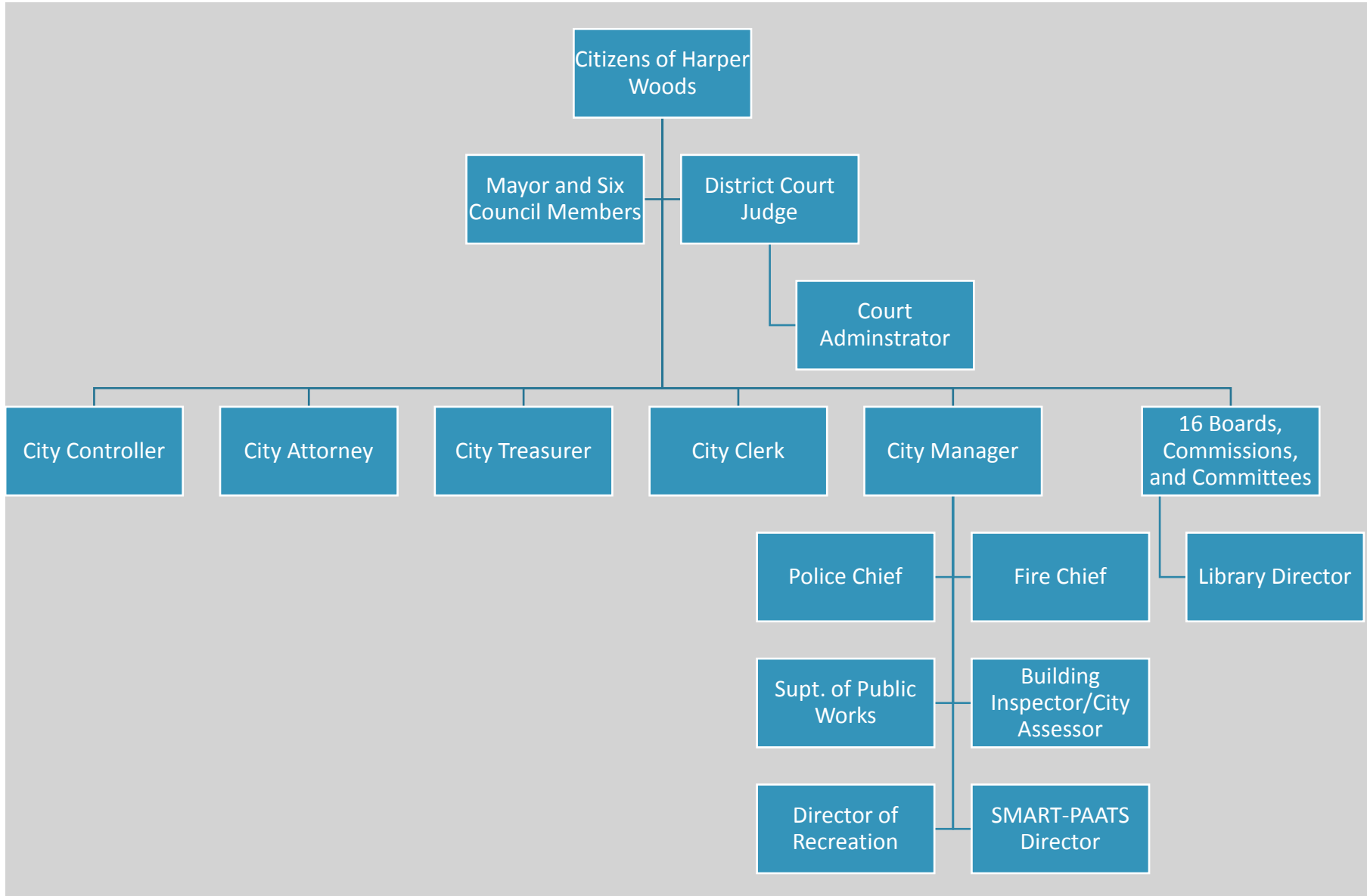
MILLAGE

A property tax millage can be used to finance specific parks and recreation projects or for operation of recreation facilities. The dedicated millage has gained favor in many communities because voters are increasingly wary of approving millage increases for non-specified purposes. Approval by voters is required before a millage can be assessed. A millage is subject to periodic renewal by a vote of the people.

USER FEES

Fees can be charged by the community to the users of specific recreation facilities or for enrollment in recreation programs. User fees can provide substantial support for park facilities. Other communities throughout Michigan have established user fees for swimming pools, tennis courts, wave pools, use of lighted athletic fields, and use of indoor facilities. User fees are a promising source of funding in the municipality if used selectively for specific facilities and services.

Figure 5: City of Harper Woods Administrative Structure [confirm]



BOND PROGRAMS

A number of bond programs can be used to finance construction of parks and recreation facilities:

- **General Obligation Bonds:** General Obligation Bonds are issued for specific community projects and may not be used for other purposes. These bonds are usually paid off with property tax revenues.
- **Revenue Bonds:** Revenue Bonds are issued for construction of public projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project. For example, revenue bonds could be issued for construction of a concession and restroom facility at one of the community parks.
- **Special Assessment Bonds:** Special Assessment Bonds are issued to pay for projects that benefit a particular segment of the population. For example, recreation improvements that benefit a defined subdivision or neighborhood could be financed using special assessment bonds, in which case the residents who receive the benefit would be assessed.

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES GRANTS

Following is a summary of the two viable recreation grant programs now available through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) for communities that have an up-to-date recreation plan:

MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND (MNRTF): Eligible projects include acquisition of land or rights in land for recreational uses or for protection of the land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty, including additions to existing parks, forest lands or wildlife areas. Development of public outdoor-recreation facilities is eligible (such as picnic areas, beaches, boating access, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ballfields, tennis courts, and trails). Funds are provided through sale of oil and mineral leases on State land. Local contributions equal to at least 25 percent of the project cost are required. There is no minimum or maximum amount for acquisition projects. The minimum allowable grant for development is \$15,000 and the maximum is \$500,000.

There are three special initiatives approved by the Trust Fund Board of Trustees. Proposals will receive special attention if they:

- Are located within U.S. Census Bureau Metropolitan Statistical Areas;
- Increase environmental education facilities statewide; but particularly in urban areas; and
- Acquire land or develop trail ways that contribute to the development of a statewide trail network.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF): Administered eligible projects include community recreation and trailway improvements. These are grants of \$10,000 to \$250,000 to local units of government for development of facilities such as ballfields, tennis courts, playgrounds, trails and picnic areas; and including support facilities; renovation of existing facilities and retro-fitting of existing facilities to make them accessible to persons with disabilities. Funds are provided through federal appropriations. The grant match basis is 50 percent MDNR/50 percent local.

RECREATION PASSPORT: The Recreation Passport program is funded through proceeds of park passes purchased for admission to State Parks in Michigan. Grants of between \$7,500 and \$75,000 are available to communities mainly for the improvement of existing parks, though new park development is technically eligible.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Revenues obtained through the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used for a variety of community improvement projects, including development of recreation facilities or land acquisition for new parks or athletic fields in low and moderate income neighborhoods that qualify under the program; the City is a sub-recipient of Wayne County's CDBG program.

DONATIONS

Businesses, corporations, private clubs, PTO's (Parent Teacher Organizations/Associations) and community organizations will often contribute to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the communities in which they are located. Private sector contributions may be in the form of monetary contributions, the donation of land, the provision of volunteer services, or the contribution of equipment or facilities.

FOUNDATIONS

A foundation is a special non-profit legal entity that is established as a mechanism through which land, cash, and securities can be donated for the benefit of parks and recreation services. The assets are disbursed by the foundation Board of Directors according to a predetermined plan. Funding for recreation facilities through foundations is typically very limited.

LEASE OR CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS

The City of Harper Woods could consider contracts with private entrepreneurs to provide services at city-owned park facilities, such as recreation programming, food service, or facility maintenance. Typically, the privatization of services can increase recreation opportunities available to residents, while minimizing the City's administrative costs.

PUBLIC USE CONVEYANCES

Administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, this program provides state lands acquired through delinquent taxes for local government units for public use. Acceptable uses of land acquired under this program include development of local parks.

C. GRANT HISTORY

Though the City of Harper Woods does not regularly receive grant funding for maintenance or improvements to its parks, it has been a recipient of grant funds for specific capital projects in the past. Table 5 provides a description of the projects for which the City received grant funding.

Table 5: Harper Woods Grant History

Project Year / Project Number	Project Title	Grant Amount	Project Description
1973 / 26-00516	Danbury Park	\$3,200	Acquire .13 acres of land for outdoor recreation
1976 / 26-00745	Salter Park	\$201,380	Acquire 9 acres of land for outdoor recreation
1978 / 26-01060 B2	Salter Park	\$147,355	Development of park, including infrastructure, picnic shelters, landscaping, tennis courts, drinking fountain, restrooms, park signage
1981 / 26-01195	Salter Park	\$85,000	Development of park, including playground, basketball court, handball/racquetball, shuffleboard, boundary fencing, landscaping, park signage



SECTION V. BASIS FOR ACTION PLAN

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) has adopted a set of standards, based upon those developed by the National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA), to determine the need for recreation facilities in each community. These standards establish 1) the specific recreation facilities such as tennis courts or soccer fields, which should be available based upon the population of the community; and 2) the “service areas,” or number and type of parks that should be available to residents within a certain distance of their homes. Each of these standards will be applied to the existing inventory of community-wide and school district recreation facilities to determine if deficiencies are present. The results of this analysis will be incorporated, in part, into the Action Plan that follows.

A. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING FACILITIES AND SERVICE AREAS

Recreation facilities serving Harper Woods residents are compared to the MDNR standards in Tables 6 and 7. These comparisons provide a general idea of deficiencies, but it must be understood that the MDNR standards are not intended to be followed to the letter. Needs of the population vary from one community to the next.

A. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT

RECREATION OPINION SURVEY

An important component of the public engagement for the City of Harper Woods' update to its Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the online and "hard copy" survey was taken by 313 residents and stakeholders between April 10th and October 3rd, 2017. 90.24% of respondents identified themselves as Harper Woods residents; the other roughly 10% were likely students from Harper Woods High School (the survey was administered to a handful of civics students).

The City publicized the survey on its homepage, and the survey was also referenced in an article by C&G Newspaper covering Harper Woods.

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions pertaining to the appearance, maintenance, and overall condition of the existing parks and facilities. Additionally, we asked respondents to choose improvements and/or additions they'd like see developed at each park facility.

GENERAL INSIGHTS

Harper Woods' park system is relatively well thought of, with 73.59% of survey respondents rating the "condition and maintenance of the City's parks" as "Excellent" or "Good". 58.7% of survey respondents are satisfied with the number and type of parks and recreation opportunities available in Harper Woods.

VISITS TO PARKS

Many of the respondents simply don't visit the City's three parks (Danbury, Salter, and Johnston), but Salter and Johnston are considerably better visited than Danbury, which is to be expected due to the locations of, and amenities in, the three parks.

Johnston Park is "fairly often" or "very frequently" visited by approximately 29% of respondents; Salter is visited with the same frequency by approximately 21% of residents, and Danbury is only 4.3% "fairly often" or "very frequently" visited.

Regarding *when* respondents prefer to visit the parks, there were four choices, as follow:

1. Weekend 58.86% prefer
2. Weekday evening 21.74% prefer
3. Weekday afternoon 11.37% prefer
4. Weekday morning 8.03% prefer

RECREATION FACILITIES

Community parks and recreation facilities are often known because of the presence of sports fields, including baseball / softball diamonds, soccer, and so on. Several respondents noted that they desire basketball courts in the community. When asked “what additional outdoor recreation facilities are needed within the City”, at least 40% of the respondents noted they desired the following options:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| 1. Outdoor swimming pool | 59.18% |
| 2. Running / walking trails | 53.74% |
| 3. Splash pad | 44.56% |
| 4. Dog park | 48.30% |

RECREATION PROGRAMS

Those surveyed were asked what Harper Woods could do to improve programming and activities, with the most frequent replies as follows:

- (Provide a) variety of activities: art, cooking, crafting, theater, festivals, etc.
- Coordinate programs and activities with the Public Library to prevent overlap.
- Increase security.
- Expand means of notifying the public.
- Develop events, festivals, community activities.

RESPONDENT SNAPSHOT

We asked a handful of questions to help understand who the survey respondents were, to help refine the needs of particular demographic groups. The respondents were majority women (62%), primarily comprised of young and older folks (not middle-aged), and 75% of respondents owned their homes.

See Appendix A, SurveyMonkey, for detailed information

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

On October 23, 2017, we facilitated six Roundtable Discussions at various locations, as follow:

- Harper Woods High School class of juniors.
- Harper Woods High School class of seniors.
- Harper Woods High School class of freshmen.
- Services for Older Citizens (SOC) administrators who work with Harper Woods seniors.
- Harper Woods Library with non-profit and public recreation providers (Harper Woods Public Schools Superintendent and NU MEN Director).
- Harper Woods Library with Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and resident recreation users.



Above: High School freshmen who provided creative, thoughtful input regarding the parks and recreation environment in Harper Woods.

There were a number of broad themes that emerged, as follow:

- Community Recreation Center – the youth especially expressed a desire for an indoors community recreation center with court games, a walking / running track, concessions, fitness equipment, meeting and common space, and other typical amenities.
- The youth like playground equipment (especially swings), passively enjoying the parks with friends, and would like food and drink options to be available in outdoor parks.
- Youth expressed strong desires for basketball courts, and had mixed responses on whether they would invite conflict or unsafe behaviors.
- The youth also expressed desire for flexible playing fields and courts.
- Walking and running paths are desired by the youth and the resident recreation users with whom we spoke.
- Creative ideas were miniature golf, adventure course-style amenities, skateboarding and inline skating amenities, partnering with the Schools for a joint Community Recreation Center with sports-related education on-site, and more.
- Participants think that the communication of events, amenities, and programs should be improved.
- Proximity of Harper Woods Park Place near Salter Park was seen as a natural important consideration (i.e. regarding access, programming, etc.) to the participants from SOC.

Participants also complimented the operation and maintenance of the three City parks, and noted that their families and friends enjoy visiting them.

B. RECREATION DEFICIENCIES

SERVICE AREAS

Map 4 illustrates the typical service area by neighborhood and community parks in Harper Woods. The map indicates that the majority of the City is underserved by pocket / mini parks and neighborhood parks. An area in the northeast section of the City is not within the service area of any community, neighborhood or pocket / mini parks. However, most residents do have access to either a public park or private or public-school grounds.

EXISTING FACILITIES

Table 6 outlines recreation standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association and by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. These standards recommend minimum standards for different recreation facilities based on existing and projected population. According to this analysis, the Harper Woods project area is underserved by 4 tennis courts, 3 basketball courts, 3 softball, 2 volleyball courts, 2 soccer fields, 1 baseball diamond, and 1 football field.

To get a better understanding of what recreational amenities are not accessible in the community, public school facilities are also shown on Table 6. In most cases, the deficiency levels decreased when the City's and the schools' facilities were combined. The exceptions are volleyball courts and dedicated soccer fields.

The raw numbers do not address the quality of existing parks and recreation facilities. Upon closer examination, deficiencies or limitations are apparent because of the maintenance, level of development and individual size of existing open space available.

ACCESSIBILITY

All parks do not meet accessibility requirements, mainly due to the lack of accessible pathways to all park improvements (though there are many accessible pathways throughout the system). A detailed inventory and analysis should be completed by a certified playground inspector to identify problem areas and develop a strategy for replacement and improvements. Modern equipment with transfer points and ramps, resilient surfacing, and accessible pathways are required to ensure safe integrated play by all residents of the community.

PROGRAM DEFICIENCIES

While the city provides a very large and wide variety of sports and programs for school age children, there may be a need to provide more activities for adults and for teenagers after school hours. While better promotion of existing programs can increase participation, varying schedules (e.g. late-night basketball) may attract adults that work shift hours. Development of additional

programs for teenagers and adults have been identified as a need in the community. Finally, it is important for the City to not duplicate or compete with the School District's programming, since the School facilities are those that are used by the City for indoor recreation programming, and the partnership is an important one.

PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

Many residents would like to see non-motorized trails and paved pathways for pedestrian and bike use throughout the city linking major open space with parks and school facilities.

ADA COMPLIANCE

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all citizens have access to all facilities provided by the City regardless of physical disability. All three City parks could be brought into further compliance with the ADA requirements so all citizens can participate and enjoy the park system and facilities. Also, some programming is not accessible due to physical barriers such as the dance program in the basement of the library. The City should ensure that all citizens have access to all programs.

SAFETY

Safety and the perception of safety are important to increasing the use of existing parks. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a program adopted nationally that increases the perception of safety for a normal user and the perception of risk for a would-be offender. CPTED "is [the] proper design and effective use of the built environment which can lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime and an improvement in the quality of life" (National Crime Prevention Institute, 1986). Four principles are utilized: 1) the placement of physical features, activities and people in such a way as to maximize visibility (Natural Surveillance); 2) the physical guidance of people coming and going from a space by the judicious placement of entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping and lighting (Natural Access Control); 3) the use of physical attributes that express ownership, such as fences, pavement treatments, art, signage and landscaping (Territorial Reinforcement); and 4) Maintenance.

Table 6: Recreation Facilities Evaluation, City of Harper Woods

	Recommended Standard ¹	Existing Municipal/ Public Facilities	Existing School/ Public Facilities	Total Facilities	Recommended Need ^{2,3}	Surplus (+) / Deficiency (-) (Municipal)	Surplus (+) / Deficiency (-) (Municipal + Schools)
Basketball Courts ^{3,5}	1/5,000	0	3	3	3	-3	0
Tennis Courts	1/2,000	2	4	6	7	-4	-3
Volleyball Courts	1/5,000	0	0	0	3	-3	-3
Baseball Fields	1/5,000	2	3	5	3	-1	+2
- Lighted Fields	1/30,000	0	1	1	0	0	+1
Softball	1/5,000	0	1	1	3	-3	-2
Football Fields	1/20,000	0	1	1	1	-1	0
Soccer Fields	1/10,000	0	0	0	1	-1	-1
Golf Courses - 9 hole	1/25,000	0	0	0	1	-1	-1
- 18 hole	1/50,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Driving Range	1/50,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swimming Pool Indoor	1/20,000	0	1	1	1	-1	0
- Outdoor	1/40,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ice Rinks- Indoor	1/50,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Outdoor	1/20,000	1	0	0	1	0	0
Running Track (1/4 mile)	1/20,000	0	1	1	0	0	+1
Playgrounds	1/3,000	4	4	8	5	-1	+3
Picnic Areas	None Published	6	0	6	-	+6	+6
Cross-Country Ski Trails (miles)	1/10,000	0	0	0	1	-1	-1
Nature Trails (miles)	1/20,000	0	0	0	1	-1	-1
Sledding Hills	1/40,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bicycle Trails (miles)	1/40,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horseback Riding Trails (miles)	1/50,000	0	0	0	0	0	0

Footnotes: ¹ Recommended number of each facility per unit of population (National Recreation and Park Association/Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards). ² Based on U.S. Census 2010 population count of 14,236. ³ Rounded up to the nearest whole number

Table 7: Comparison to Accepted Standards, City of Harper Woods

Harper Woods Community Comparison to Accepted Standards ⁴	Recommended Minimum Acreage per 1,000 Residents ¹	City Acreage ²	School Facilities ⁸	Total Acreage ⁹	Recommended Acreage for the Population ³	Surplus (+) / Deficiency (-) (City)	Surplus (+) / Deficiency (-) (City & School)
Mini-Parks ⁵	0.25	2.2	-	2.2	3.6	-1.4	-1.4
Neighborhood Parks	1.0	8.5	18.2 ⁷	26.7	14.2	+5.7	+12.5
Community Parks	5.0	13.2	-	13.2	71.2	-58	-58
Regional Parks	5.0	-	-	-	71.2	Not Applicable ⁶	Not Applicable ⁶
Special Use Facilities	Variable	0	-	0	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Linear Parks (approximate miles)	Variable	0	-	0	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Footnotes:

- 1 Based on National Recreation and Parks Association recommendations.
- 2 Includes all existing public acreage excluding school acreage.
- 3 Based on U.S. Census 2010 population count of 14,236.
- 4 See Table 8.
- 5 The need for mini-parks may also be addressed partially by subdivision common areas, apartment, condominium recreation areas (acreage not determined).
- 6 It would be misleading to assess the adequacy of regional park resources based on recommended acreage for the City's population, since the regional resource must serve a much broader segment of the metropolitan area.
- 7 Acreage includes Tyrone (4.78 acres), Beacon (6.37 acres), Poupard (7.0 acres) elementary schools.
- 8 Includes public school acreage.
- 9 Equals sum of City Parks and Public Schools acreage.

Table 8: Analysis of Existing Facilities, City of Harper Woods

Type of Facility	Recreation Standards ¹	Harper Woods Community Facilities	Comments/Recommendations
Mini-Parks	Mini-Parks are small, specialized parks, usually less than an acre in size, that serve the needs of residents in the surrounding neighborhood. A mini-park may serve a limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.	Danbury Park is the City’s only Mini-Park, totaling approximately 2.2 acres. Only residents in the north end of the City have access to this park, and lack of parking limits access to those not within walking distance.	<p>The NRPA recommends 0.25 to 0.50 mini-park acreage per 1,000 residents.</p> <p>A mini-park should be located within a five-minute walk from all residents. More mini-parks should be developed throughout the City as land acquisition opportunities arise so that all citizens can walk to one in five minutes or less. Since mini-parks are small, vacant lots can be bought and turned into parks.</p>
Neighborhood Parks	Neighborhood parks are typically multi-purpose facilities that provide areas for intensive recreation activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playgrounds, skating, picnicking, etc. Neighborhood parks are generally 15 acres or more in size and serve a population up to 5,000 residents located within ¼ to ½ mile radius from the neighborhood they serve.	Salter is classified as a neighborhood park even though it has less than 15 acres. Salter Park has many facilities for outdoor recreation including a walking trail.	<p>One to two acres of neighborhood parks are recommended per 1,000 residents.</p> <p>There are a number of improvements to Salter planned as part of this document’s Action Plan (Tables 9 and 10), which could greatly increase the visits and satisfaction with Salter.</p> <p>This park has been mentioned as a possible location for a new recreation center. Since park space is limited, input from citizens and neighborhood groups should be obtained prior to major redevelopment.</p>

Community Parks	Community Parks typically contain a wide variety of recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents from several neighborhoods. Community parks may include areas for intense recreation facilities, such as athletic complexes and swimming pools. These parks usually contain other facilities not commonly found in neighborhood parks such as nature areas, picnic pavilions, lighted ball fields, and concession facilities.	Johnston Park is classified as a community parks with 13.3 acres. It contains facilities found in no other park in the City including ball diamonds and batting cages. Again, it is slightly smaller than the defined size of a community park.	<p>The NRPA's standard requirement for community parks is 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents.</p> <p>Restripping the tennis courts for multi-purpose use is planned, and non-motorized trails could be integrated into this facility. If areas cannot be identified within the City where additional Community Parks can be developed, then partnerships with neighboring communities and school districts to share facilities should be considered.</p> <p>This park has also been mentioned as a possible location for a new recreation center. Since park space is limited, input from citizens and neighborhood groups should be obtained prior to major redevelopment.</p>
Regional/ Metropolitan Parks	Regional parks are typically located on sites with unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, wildlife habitats, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping and trail use. Many also include active play areas.	The Area is well served by regional parks and facilities.	Regional parks typically serve several communities within a one-hour drive. Partnerships with regional local, county, and state facilities should be explored to fill existing voids within the City's park and recreation system.

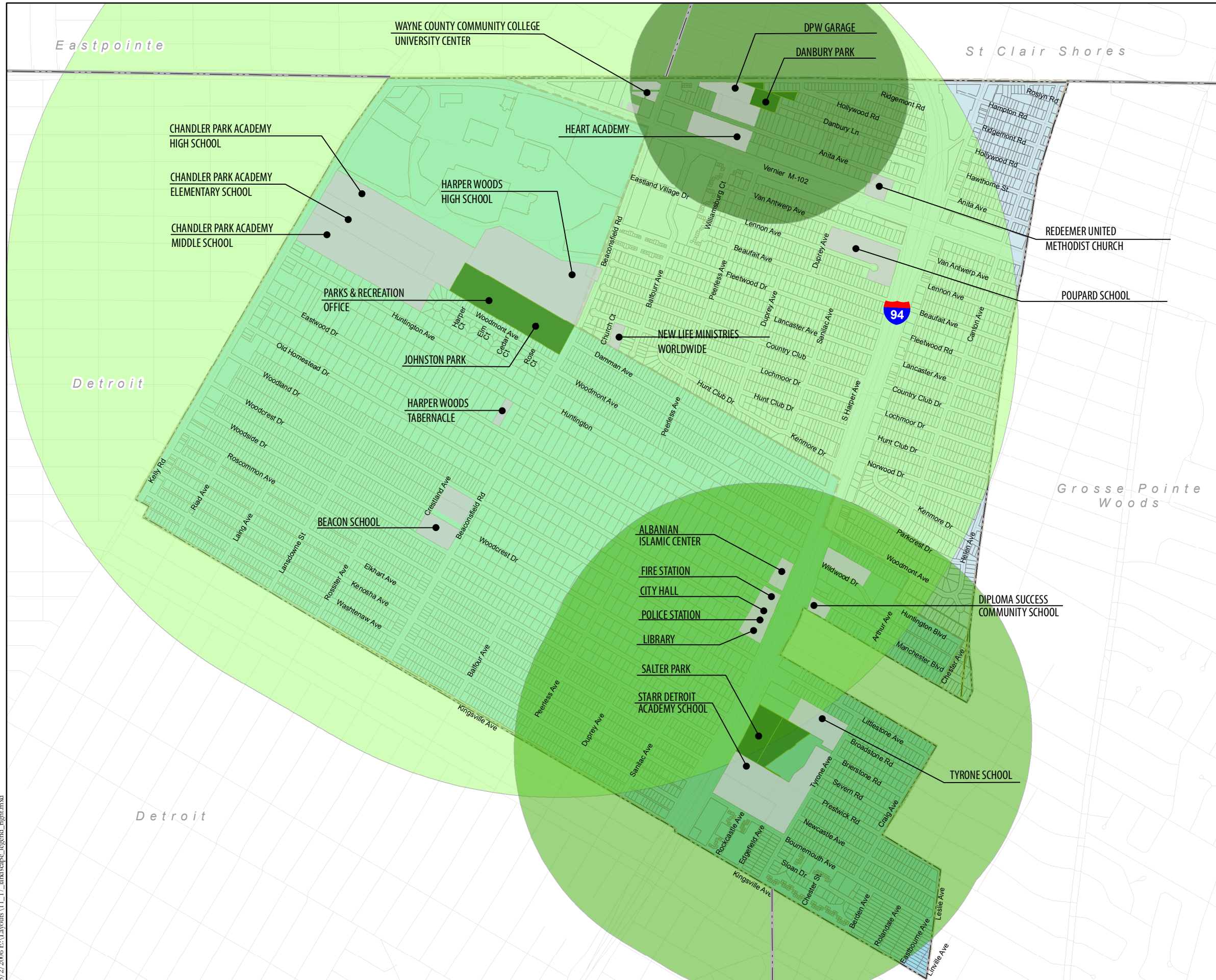
Special Use/ Conservancy Parks	Special use recreation facilities are typically single-purpose recreation facilities, such as golf courses, nature centers, outdoor theaters, interpretative centers, or facilities for the preservation or maintenance of the natural or cultural environment. Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment may be the primary focus with recreation use as a secondary objective.	No special use parks are located within the City.	If areas cannot be identified within the City where these facilities can be developed, then partnerships with neighboring communities and school districts to share facilities should be considered, if and when the community desires these types of facilities.
Passive Parks	The primary purpose of passive areas is to provide relief from highly developed residential and commercial neighborhoods. Facilities may include sitting areas and other pedestrian amenities, landscaping, monuments and fountains, and historical features.	No parks contain passive recreation facilities in the City.	A City-wide design and planting plan should be created to guide future development of passive areas in the City park system such as gardens or reflection pools.
Linear Parks	A linear park is any area developed for one or more modes of recreation travel, such as hiking, bicycling, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, canoeing, horseback riding, and pleasure driving.	There are no identifiable linear parks within the City.	Small looped non-motorized pathways can be developed within Johnston Park.

Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources: Recreation Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, 1983, Lancaster, National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Map 4 Parks and Playgrounds Service Areas

Harper Woods, Michigan

October 18, 2017



LEGEND

- Parks Facilities
- Public Facilities
- Private/Semi Private Facilities
- Grosse Pointe Public School System
- Harper Woods District
- Municipal Boundary

SERVICE AREA

- Community Park (1 Mile Service Area)
- Neighborhood Park (0.5 Mile Service Area)
- Mini-Park (0.25 Mile Service Area)



Basemap Source: City of Harper Woods 7/17/12
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc. 6/98



SECTION VI. ACTION PLAN

This Chapter of the plan is the culmination of a comprehensive planning effort that began with the thorough analysis of the physical and demographic attributes of the community, followed by extensive public engagement. Existing parks and recreation facilities and programs were inventoried and evaluated. An assessment of need was then developed that considered both accepted recreation standards and the specialized needs of persons with disabilities. Finally, these needs were analyzed and reviewed by the Harper Woods Recreation Advisory Board and Planning Commission with input from the public.

The limiting factor in the Harper Woods parks and recreation system is the lack of facilities that are under City control and available for recreation programs. The City provides an impressive number and variety of programs using alternate facilities. The Harper Woods School District facilities are utilized by the City when they are available. However, in order to increase and offer quality programs and services that are suggested by the survey respondents, facilities are needed.

The overriding need is for a community recreation facility that provides space for indoor programs, activities and offices for the Parks and Recreation Department.

One potential way to develop such a facility is to encourage cooperation among other public and private entities, including the Harper Woods School District and the communities that constitute the Grosse Pointes. This cooperation is ongoing, particularly regarding the programs that the Neighborhood Club offers. However, opportunities should be explored for providing a regional recreational facility that could serve the needs of Harper Woods as well as the region mentioned. The proposed indoor recreation facility would significantly help in satisfying this need.

A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals should be broad and address general needs and establish the basis for setting specific programmed objectives. Objectives are measurable results that the community works toward accomplishing.

1. FACILITIES

- A. Goal: Develop a comprehensive community recreation facility that meets the recreational needs of the public and that provides office space for the Parks and Recreation Department.

- Objective: Meet the recreational needs of Harper Woods residents in terms of program, equipment, and facilities.

- Objective: Provide increased program capacity.

- Objective: Maintain community competitiveness, ability to retain, engage, and attract residents.

- Objective: Provide facilities that decrease the City's dependence on Harper Woods School District's facilities and resources.

- B. Goal: Provide outdoor basketball courts per demand by residents and stakeholders.

- Objective: Develop with appropriate site amenities, screening, noise and light controls, and so forth, in a context sensitive manner.

- Objective: Provide a recreation opportunity that Harper Woods youth are excited about.

- C. Goal: Provide, promote, and encourage the establishment and maintenance of non-motorized trails.

- Objective: Create a multi-purpose pathway system in City parks that connects to the City's sidewalk system.

- D. Goal: Improve and enhance the recreational opportunities at Salter, Johnston, and Danbury Park.

- Objective: Monitor and repair/replace outdated playground equipment with newer structures as necessary.

- Objective: Include greater variety of play equipment that appeals to all ages.
- Objective: Comply with ADA requirements at minimum.

2. PROGRAMMING

- A. Goal: Continue evaluation of all programs and adjust the type and format of programs to best suit diverse community needs.

- Objective: Maintain affordable rates for program participation.

- Objective: Continue strong public relations for special events.

- Objective: Expand promotion of current programs.

- Objective: Maintain and expand mechanisms to fully integrate all programs for children / persons with disabilities.

- B. Goal: Create new programs.

- Objective: Provide programming for teens consistent with input collected during planning process.

- Objective: Continually update program selection with respect to new ideas and interests, especially in regard to hobbies and exercise, when possible.

- Objective: Create new programs that provide inter-generational interaction between seniors and youth/preschoolers.

- Objective: Organize physical activities for older residents.

- C. Goal: Provide the community with municipal recreation, leisure and cultural programs that are accessible and affordable to all residents.

- Objective: Seek alternative funding such as private contributions to offset program costs through requests to service clubs, private sector, and professional organizations for sponsorships of various programs.

- Objective: Solicit and apply for state and local grants for recreation, leisure, and cultural arts programs.

- Objective: Recruit and train a pool of volunteers and mentors to assist in implementation of various programs.

- Objective: Establish a Teen Advisory Council of high school aged youth and young adults.

3. ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

A. Goal: Investigate innovative ways to fund and reduce the costs of programming.

B. Goal: Provide staffing at levels commensurate to programming and maintenance needs.

Objective: Provide programming for teens consistent with input collected during planning process.

Objective: Continually update program selection with respect to new ideas and interests, especially in regard to hobbies and exercise, when possible.

Objective: Create new programs that provide inter-generational interaction between seniors and youth/preschoolers.

Objective: Organize physical activities for older residents.

C. Goal: Market recreation services to potential users.

Objective: Provide updated programming on the internet and social media.

Objective: Continue coverage of recreation programs on Cable TV.

Objective: Continue coverage of recreation program on seasonal Recreation Department newsletter, and distribute electronically by email and/or posting on the City's website.

Objective: Place signage at conspicuous locations.

4. ACCESS TO FACILITIES

A. Goal: Eliminate existing barriers to recreation facilities and programs by creating barrier-free facilities and adopting a policy of "inclusive recreation."

Objective: Examine existing programs to ensure that they provide recreation and leisure opportunities to all residents regardless of their social, economic, or physical status.

Objective: Ensure that each play setting and activity area is accessible, that accessible play components are placed throughout each activity area, and that similar play opportunities are provided to children with disabilities.

Objective: Ensure that landscape areas and picnic areas are accessible.

B. ACTION PLAN

Table 9 is a summary of actions that the City and its partners should undertake during the planning period, and beyond; these activities are discrete and consistent with the Goals and Objectives, public input received, and the analysis of the City's parks and recreation needs. The activities are less defined than those found in Table 10, which is a Capital Improvement Program Summary with specific capital improvements, their estimated costs, and the year(s) that the actions are proposed to be undertaken.



Right: Recreation Advisory Board member and International Pickle Ball Ambassador George Cotton, III after a game of pickle ball at Johnston Park.

Table 9: Summary of Action Items, City of Harper Woods

Issue	Finding/Observation	Recommendation/Comments
<p>A. Community Recreation Facility</p>	<p>Need Identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents, other stakeholders, and strategic partners have expressed strong desire (20+ years) for an indoor Community Recreation Facility. • Facility to house administrative offices and recreation equipment. • May lead to less dependency on school and other public facilities. • Centralized location for programming and activities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate public / private partnerships and funding streams, including partnering with the Harper Woods School District, to facilitate financing and development of indoor facility. 2. Determine priority of this activity in context of all City / public facility needs, and other pressing demands including City Hall upgrades and the need for redevelopment at key sites, primarily the Eastland Center (declining indoor mall). 3. Identify best location for facility, prioritizing accessibility for all community members and the lack of disruption of existing park and/or recreation functions. 4. Develop Conceptual Site Plan, including architectural renderings, a use program, and cost estimates, that includes multipurpose courts, walking / running track(s), offices, meeting rooms, fitness equipment, storage, etc. 5. Explore the level of resident support for a dedicated Parks and Recreation millage.
<p>B. Teen Facilities and Programs</p>	<p>Need Identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harper Woods teens who were engaged during the public process expressed a need for a “third place” other than home and school. They expressed a desire for places with recreation, food and drink, technology, and programming, as well as informal gathering space. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study the alignment of this action item with the Community Recreation Facility, since the facility could satisfy both needs. 2. If indoor Community Recreation Facility is found to be infeasible, study and plan for programs, activities, and public space improvements that cater to the needs of young Harper Woods residents (study “placemaking” and parks and recreation best practices for teens). 3. Consider establishment of Teen Advisory Council to help guide activities.
<p>C. Eastland Center</p>	<p>Need Identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over underutilized, declining indoor mall and associated developments arose frequently during public engagement for this plan. • Future redevelopment of Eastland Center site may very well include some park, open space, trail, and/or recreation component(s). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate public/private partnerships for redevelopment of mall site, including the provision of important park, open space, trail, and/or recreation component(s).

C., <i>continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plan explicitly designates the Eastland Center or a portion of the site as a future potential park or related facility. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate public or quasi-public ownership of site for increased control over future sustainability, attractiveness, and positive contribution to overall development environment, including the parks and recreation function of City of Harper Woods. Draw upon great wealth of research, study, and case studies of redevelopment of mall sites into walkable, attractive, sustainable mixed-use town centers.
D. Develop Playgrounds	<p>Moderate Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing equipment may need replacement or repair over life of this plan. Maintain industry standard fall zones. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Replace and repair equipment as it becomes obsolete or unsafe, utilizing modular equipment. Use resilient surfacing and make accessible to all citizens (ADA compliance at minimum).
E. Geographic Distribution	<p>Moderate Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents and stakeholders engaged during public process did not indicate a dissatisfaction with location / distribution of parks. However, Service Area Analysis identifies lack of coverage (mitigated by location of Harper Woods School District Elementary Schools). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify vacant or under-utilized land for future acquisition, prioritized in an area not currently serviced by a pocket or neighborhood park. Coordinate with school districts on existing school sites, should they become available for acquisition in the future.
F. Facility Deficiencies	<p>Moderate Need:</p> <p>Based on National Standards (NRPA), the City's parks and recreation facilities are deficient, including the following number and types of facilities that may be good to develop based on public input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 basketball courts 4 tennis courts 3 volleyball courts 1 baseball field 3 softball fields 1 soccer field 1 playground 1 mile of nature trail 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community need for these facilities is offset by existing school facilities and strong partnership with school districts. Opportunities to develop these facilities should be investigated over the course of the time period covered by this plan (on an annual basis). Develop sand volleyball court at Salter (see Table 10).
G. Safety	<p>Moderate Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Though relatively few unsafe conditions were documented during the planning process, it's important to continuously study the safety of equipment and improve when necessary. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct annual inspections of facilities and improvements. Consider Community Policing Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles when designing / installing new equipment or facilities.

<i>G., continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always design future facility upgrades and capital improvements with safety perception in mind. 	
H. Maintenance	<p>Moderate Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many outdoor hard courts need resurface or replacement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake annual evaluation and budgeting process so that maintenance of hard surfaces is prioritized. Continuously evaluate playground structures for maintenance / safety deficiencies, and prioritize repair / replacement when present.
I. Future Park-Specific Improvements		
Danbury Park	<p>Future Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pavilion structure for increased usage of picnic facilities. Additional parking. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Additional parking should be developed or acquired before pavilion structure is constructed. Investigate the feasibility of additional parking, including potential for shared parking between City's DPS site (west of park) or church (south of park), or develop parking on parkland.

Table 10: Capital Improvement Program

Facility/Program	Year(s)	Proposed Improvements	Estimated Costs	Potential Funding Sources
A. Johnston Park	2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Resurface and install multi-purpose striping of two existing tennis courts to add use of pickleball. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> \$10,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development Block Grant. General Fund.
B. Salter Park	2018 2019 2020 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explore installation of three or four half-court basketball courts, including installation of drinking fountains, screening, lighting, and related improvements. Install sand volleyball court in place of existing unused full-court basketball court. Install bocce court in place of existing unused shuffleboard courts. Replace parking lot. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> \$60,000 \$15,000 \$15,000 \$100,000 <p>(Total est. \$190,000)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wayne County Parks Millage grant. Michigan Department of Natural Resources grants. Community Development Block Grant. Private Sources (foundations, other). General Fund.